Is Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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wash every day until Wednesday came to permit her to dance. When she washed with the sacred moistened clay, she rubbed the white on her children.

"Will all the women dance on Wednesday who have the same god as you?"

The child's mother shook her head. "If the god comes to them, yes. If he doesn't come, they can't dance."

And the bassia's wife said, "The women who are in the menstrual house can't dance. When they hear the drums, they are troubled, but they must remain quiet."

The woman had spoken too eagerly and too loudly, for her husband, overhearing her, said something in a low rapid voice, and at once the women fell silent and several of them remembered errands they had to see to.

4

"When men are in the council house, you mustn't interrupt," said the bassia's wife to the white woman. "If we did what you did just now, our husbands would scold us when they got home, and if we did it again, they would beat us."

She had taken upon herself all the prerogatives of friendship, and continually criticized the manners of her visitor.

The old were to be greeted last. A gift was to be received by another. When returning a piece of carving to another's hand, the carving should rest on the outstretched palm, while the elbow of that arm lay on the palm of the other hand. In the presence of men, a woman who took a stool should turn it about and sit on its narrower side.

"Never sit on the bare earth. The spirits don't like it," she said one instant, and the next, "Don't play with your fingers on top of your sun helmet. Your breasts will get long. Drumming is not a thing for women."

There had been other warnings during earlier visits to Bush Negro villages, but none had borne down so heavily upon the shortcomings of the stranger.

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village. A household was not confined to one building only, but few who were not men of rank and means had more than three. One was for the woman and her children, another for storing the crops, and the third was the man's treasure house, where women might not come. It was like the matter of wives. Only men of position could afford more than one. But if a man had two wives and both lived in his village, then perhaps five huts would bear a design identified with him on the carved side posts which outlined the low doorway. This design would recur in the various carvings he had made for his women—it was his crest. And though a man from another village, who was not related to him, might like it, and liking it copy it, this practice would be socially frowned upon.

A village quarter, however, did not contain only dwelling places, and storehouses, and men's treasure houses. Certain families also had in their part of the village an enclosed shrine for the family gods. If in a given family a powerful Vodu, or snake god, had come to an ancestress and had in a dream, or in a seizure, or through a revelation made to an obia man, chosen her as his *'asi*—his priestess or medium—then with this disclosure came the instructions for the place of locating a house of worship to that Vodu, and the type of house it was to be. Such a shrine, once erected, would be kept in the quarter, and worshiped by the members of that family. Sometimes in front of a dwelling hut, a low enclosure, the size of a small kennel, would stand a little to the side of the door. This was a house to Toné, the river spirit. In one such house lived a woman who had a great Toné god. She had the gift of prophecy. When the men gathered for a council meeting in the village of the Granman, then she, too, would sometimes be bidden to come and sit with the men, though, being a woman, she could never speak at council meetings.

"Touch her skin," the other women said, pointing out this albino woman, "and you will have your desires fulfilled."

In each quarter, too, there was an open house where the women did their cooking, and perhaps a platform or two,

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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"Tonight there will be dancing for you," And'u said, when we left the shrine. "I will go and pray again before the dance, and then I will go to my hammock early, for I leave at sunrise. We will meet again at the G'aman's."

The bassia's wife followed us to our house.

"You are a woman, yet you went inside the shrine. Maybe you do have gods, white woman. When you go in again will you pray to the Earth Mother for the woman Kupa, who is my sister? Twice she bore girl children, and both sleep. Now she is with child again. She wears many obias about her neck, and daily she washes with white clay. She is the woman with the wooden obia doll hanging between her breasts. No, not the one who has the small black sack about her neck. Any woman who is with child wears that. You will know her when you see her. She is beautiful."

7

The dance was held in the bassia's quarter, in front of one of his houses. The bassia was a man of wealth. He had three wives, while the chief had but two. Whether one of the three was only nominally his wife and had come to him at the death of a brother, we were unable to learn, but that his means were large was apparent. The house where his personal possessions were stored was built high on posts. A house so raised stood out from those about it and bore the same name as the moon. Underneath it, in the shelter made by the posts, lay a partly made drum, some carved wooden implements, and carpenter's tools. There was also a forked stick in the ground upon which rested a black obia pot with water and weeds in it.

The children began the dancing.

Ayo, ayo
Ayo, ayei,
Agida comes,
Ayo, ayo,
Earth spirits come,
Ayo, ayei.

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-8 (1928-1929) 1934
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C25 some action was decided upon by the krutu, the several bassias were entrusted with its execution. Most villages
[562] had at least one woman bassia, and she was responsible to the village head for the behavior of the women. If food was to be gathered for a festival, if the village was to be cleaned for a special occasion like a visit to the village of strangers, it was she who saw that the work was done properly. If there were disputes between two women, it was she who carried the news to the village head, and she who transmitted his censure or decision, if the affair was not of sufficient gravity to warrant the calling together of the old men.

562 "Do the women talk in the big krutu?" we asked Bassia Anaisi, of the Granman's village.

"No, not in krutu. But they talk plenty at home."

623 The bassia, we learned, had other duties. He was not
624 only the messenger of his chief, he was also his official spokesman at krutu, and his intermediary in all matters of authority. If a council of the village was to be called, it was he who announced this to the men. When the men had gathered, it was not the chief who spoke, but the bassia who propounded the questions at issue. It was for this reason that Kasanya had leaned over and advised us to call for our town man.

C23 Krutu, we learned, were of two types. Every village had its "*G'a Sembe*"—its council of the older men—who acted as an advisory body to the village captain, and the "*Lanti Krutu*," the meeting of all the men of the village. In this latter general assembly rested the final decisions.

Any important issue involving the village would be handled in two krutu, the g'a sembe krutu, and the lanti krutu. In this big lanti krutu where all the man were represented the bassia would speak the words of the chief and of the old men, and then the people would "go aside." This going aside was the concomitant of every consultation, no matter how informal the group or how unimportant the question which was being considered.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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society, the "Congo" sticks, as they were called here, or the "fighting" sticks. 532

The carvings, however, which we were admiring in the house of the captain of Ma'lobbi were for secular use. The Bush Negro craftsman brought to the ornamenting [501] of his paddles and his canoe seats, to his house posts, and particularly to the door of his treasure house, to his women's combs, and trays, and food stirrers, and clothes beaters all the traditional skill and patience. But the exceptional carver brought also the cunning in his fingers which his gods had given to him and only to few others on the river. Such a man was the captain of Ma'lobbi. Into the traditional designs such a man wove lines for the love of seeing them grow under his hand, for there were always single motifs which the people versed in the symbolism of the art would describe as "beautiful," as having no meaning. Yet with few exceptions the massing of outlines in a unified design bore on fertility. Men and women alone or together, and male and female animals were represented in all but occasional pieces.

The Bush Negro artist was a man of consequence on the river. His companions admired his skill, and the young women were proud to have his handiwork. If he showed his gifts early, he was at an advantage in courting a girl of an influential family. The girl's mother, who shared in the gifts of her daughter's suitor, might be willing to overlook other less advantageous traits in the man or in his family, while the girl's uncles would not be loath to have such a man in their family to teach his art to his sons, who would be their successors. 532 554 584

On several occasions we were permitted to see how very deeply this appreciation of fine carving went. As in the instance of the paddle we had acquired from the wife of the captain of Ma'lobbi, it had happened often that the consent of the woman to sell a given piece was necessary before any trading could take place. Sometimes we traded directly with the woman, sometimes she asked her husband, or her brother, or her son, as the more worldly 432 562 439

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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person, to act for her. But always hers was the final word, and often that word when the time came for us to carry away the piece was "No."

"It was made for me by my husband when I was a young girl. Now he sleeps, he is no more. I want to have it," was a statement which ended all bargaining.

Sometimes even after we had paid the woman, and stored the piece away, she returned with the moist coins in her hand, asking for the carved implement.

"Before some man from here will go to the city to buy me a pangi, I may lose the money, or he may lose it on the way. But if the clothes beater is here, I can use it and look at it. I want to keep it."

One vivid incident of bargaining concerned a peanut pounding board which had belonged to the sister of Bassia Anaisi. We were sitting and talking with him and his grandmother, when our eyes rested on his sister's house. From a projection hung a strikingly beautiful piece of carving. The rectangular portion of the board on which the peanuts were crushed was bordered on top and bottom with filigreed carving. It was made of brown-heart wood with inlays of purple-heart. Bassia Anaisi's sister supplemented our guesses of what the designs meant. The top represented a woman's head and headdress. The small brass nails, which made a glistening line in the center of the upper curve, were the cicatrizations on the woman's face.

"Look," said the woman, "she is a woman, but a woman hawk. Here is her neck, and the small cut-out circles here are her breasts, those curves at both ends are the wings. The very small nails are the cicatrizations on the thighs. She is a woman, and she has made herself beautiful. This large rounded portion is her belly, and the smaller one underneath is the *gonu mofo*—the gun's mouth," the last being their image for the vagina. Meeting this from the bottom curving upwards was a half-circle, which represented the male member. At the other end was more embellishment. In the center was a double curve to symbolize the first phase of the moon. Below were two "*Ingi Kodyo*,"

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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mother. The woman who had made Bayo was her sister, she told us.

The resemblance between this woman and Bayo was marked. She had the same dark skin, the same stocky, muscular build, the broad nose, the same general cast of features we had known so well in Bayo. Similar, too, were the sharply etched scars on her face, which were so black and so prominent as to bespeak her great vitality and rugged health. There were other likenesses, we learned, and of these the most valued was the strength of their gods.

We had not been long in her hut before we noticed the iron arm-band she wore. It was, we knew, a "*tapu*"—a magical preventive which, in this instance, warned its wearer of danger, and kept her from harm in a combat. Seeing it on the arm of a woman was astonishing for many reasons. Not in all our encounters on the river had we seen a woman wearing an arm obia of iron. Iron was the sign of the Kromanti, a men's group, composed of those men who had the Kromanti spirit. It was in part warriors' secret society, and in part, when it was Obia Kromanti, the men's religious society which controlled the powerful supernatural forces of preventive and healing magic which played so prominent a part in the spiritual life of the Bush Negro. Now there were, we had been told, some women who inherited the Kromanti spirit, but these were few, and not until after their menopause could they enter a Kromanti house, and when this came they were too old to participate in the dance, but they sang the songs when the spirit came to them and did whatever else was known to the initiated of their years.

But this woman who was Bayo's mother's sister was not an old woman. As she talked to us, in fact, her breast was swung over to the side, and against her ribs was the head of the child on her back who was nursing. Yet on her arm was the fighter's "tapu," as the emblem of membership in the Kromanti group.

This was so important an anomaly that, following the etiquette of the bush, we hastened at once to talk about something else.

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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BAYO, THE PLAYBOY

"Bayo has asked me to find a strong *asumani* for you," she said, naming the obia she held with the word for such magically endowed properties used by the Ashanti today, on the West Coast of Africa. In rapid succession she gave us the African words of the Kromanti designation for the white clay, for the ancestral pot, and for several other ceremonial objects we discussed with her.

"Did you make these for us?"

"Ah, no. Women do not make obias. My brother made them for you."

The next morning when we were leaving Djamungo she came to the landing place with us. In our hands were the images we had bought. The young paddlers looked on them with fear. On no account would they even come too close to us who carried them. It was not the image, nor the external properties of a sacred object which disclosed its power, but rather the magic that had been called to reside in it, and the strength of the gods of him who had been instrumental in bringing the magic to the figure of wood, the brass bell, the cowrie shells, the ant-eater's bristles, or whatever else was used.

"Tell them in your village," Bayo's mother's sister called after us, "that here at Djamungo the Kromanti spirit does not come to men only. When women get Kromanti, they, too, can fight."

2

We had not been back at our base camp for more than a day when Bayo came up the path calling the greeting of a comrade. Had we fared well with the Granman?

He had, he told with pride, seen all those things a man who went on so long a journey should see, and he had been to Lamé again, where there were strong obias and where the women knew how to love. Now he would remain with us until we left the bush, and he might even decide to go with us to the city, and from there to the French shore, where there was money to be got. What with the money he had earned for timber, and the money we had given

1i Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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him about it as he came to take the white man through the bush trails to a neighboring village.

One of the girls who admired him had achieved this, but how she had managed to make the minute braids was difficult for us to see, for Bayo's hair the day before, long for him, had not seemed sufficiently yielding to permit of braiding. Yet here he was, his head covered with innumerable small braids which divided the white scalp into sections and showed lines where the many regular parts had been made. This made quite a new man out of Bayo. He was no longer the warrior who went without food because he was bored with the idea of preparing the food—a woman's task or, at best, that of an old man like his great-grandfather Bibifo who had cooked on the up-river trip. Now he was a dandy.

"Ai-yo!" he crowed back as we speculated on the labor that had gone into the creation. "It took her almost all the night! It is hard work."

"She must like you, Bayo."

"She likes me well, ai!"

"Are you going to have her for your third wife?"

"Who knows? But a man doesn't marry every woman who braids his hair."

Soon Bayo and the white man were off through the bush, Tross going ahead as scout. Back and across the path he would dart and for the white man, unaccustomed to the sounds of the bush, it was difficult to tell whether the rustling he heard was caused by the dog, or by the small animals stirred up from time to time. Once a snake coiled on the path moved lazily away as they approached; Tross had disturbed it, and the snake had no mind for more encounters. Once a small animal of some sort dashed across the trail ahead, the dog in close pursuit, and for some moments we could hear them tearing through the underbrush.

"Aren't you afraid that some animal will hurt Tross, Bayo?"

"He is a good dog. And I have put strong obia on him."

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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000 "About half of them, I guess," he said.

5

524 609 When we returned to camp, Kasanya waited for us. He had come with the game boards he had promised to make for us, the adji game which was played in the house of death, and which the fine carver in Kasanya's village could not make because he was young, and a man needed to have a wife under the sod before he was fitted to make it.

Kasanya had taught the white man to play the game the year before, and though the white man had had much practice in playing it at home, Kasanya won one game after the other with ease.

524 609 562 With the white woman he would not play, nor would any other man—not even Bayo who showed so much indulgence toward the strangers. It was this way, Kasanya explained. A man knew that a woman could not beat him at the game, much less a woman who did not have the cunning of their bush, and would not, therefore, be expected to excel in what pertained to the life of the bush. But if the gods became capricious and allowed the white woman to win, then it would be more than a man could bear to be twitted up and down the river about it. Songs would be made up about it, and stories and proverbs. Master Nigger! A man would be a fool to risk it.

524 When Kasanya had gone, Bayo came back from Gankwe where, it seemed, his errands now took him daily. The sun was still high enough so that a game might be played before [MS] the hovering ghosts who in life had enjoyed the game would take their places beside the players, and play unseen at this game board with the living.

"Do you play adji, Bayo?"

"*Awa! Suma no de!*—Sure! No one better!"

But it soon appeared that Bayo had brought too much self-confidence with him from Gankwe. He was promptly beaten, and beaten again.

"*Suma de, Bayo?*—Someone better?"

The boy grinned, "Suma de, ai," he acknowledged.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
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622 623 352 The bosseia meet under a separate shed, specially built for this purpose. The captain has a "throne," which is an ornately carved stool. The one belonging to the captain of the village of Lombe was purchased and brought back to the American Museum of Natural History. The members of the bosseia, too, have ceremonial seats, with elaborately pierced carving, typically West African in design. When the occasion arises, a meeting is held and the council is seated about on these ceremonial benches to hold palaver.

622 623 692 [537] The business is brought up. Perhaps it is a domestic quarrel—two men over one woman. The offended party rises and begins exercising the Bush Negro's traditional privilege of unlimited and vociferous oratory. He details his wrongs. Grand gestures accompany the sonorous flow of words. The interested members of the village sit at a respectful distance from the captain and bosseia, and listen to the harangue. When other speakers have had their say, any inhabitant of the village may get up and give his or her opinion. Proudly the captain exercises his judicial talent, and the decision is handed down. It is not questioned.

622 623 562 The women members of the bosseia have as much power as the men. It is chiefly the women who see that the ancestral and village customs are enforced. They are the guardians of the ancient traditions and customs of the race. To them, also, belongs the duty of keeping the village clean. If the [364] town needs a general cleaning, the women bosseia go about from hut to hut, telling the women to get together and perform the task.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Marriage requires a bride price, consisting of pieces of cloth, sugar, tobacco, and some carved wooden implements, such as combs, paddles, trays. These are handed over to the bride's family as presents. Then the wife simply moves into her husband's hut, or he into hers. Despite their pre-marital promiscuity, it is said that on the bridal night all the inhabitants of a Bush Negro village will gather outside the hut to hear what the husband has to say regarding the bride's virginity. If the girl is not a virgin, part of the bride price may be refunded, at the husband's discretion. The gathering on such an occasion is attended by much jocularity.

The Djuka husband builds a hut for each one of his women and has another for himself, to which he may retire whenever he feels the need of bachelor seclusion. The woman sleeps in her own hut, cooks, and raises her children there. The husband comes to her when he wants to, and leaves her for another wife when impulse so guides him. She seldom quarrels with the other wives, who may even live in separate villages.

Each wife has her own provision ground, where she grows rice and cassava; her husband has cleared it for her. The cassava fields are owned by individual women, but are held in very loose tenure. At harvest time, or when a plague of insects is threatening, the women of several households work together in common.

The man's hut is called his *gudu oso*, or "treasure house." It serves to impress his women with his importance and wealth. They are forbidden to enter it, but, woman-like, they insist on peeping in. So he keeps many boxes and wood carv-

/10 cont./

574 The politeness shown toward a guest springs from the idea that unknowingly one of them might easily take the very piece that the important person wished to have, and although no comment would be made on this, it could nonetheless happen that this would trouble the guest for whom they cherish special respect, 888 or that he would thereby consider himself insulted. It is particularly to old age that they pay great respect.

Chapter VI

Household and Agricultural Implements

412 [322] [824] [531] The Bush Negroes mainly use adzes in order to hew their corjalen or canoes out of trees partially burned out beforehand; furthermore, they use planes and chisels in order to work their (usually cedarwood) (1) stools and parels or paddles (2). They are

1. Cedrela odorata L.

2. Hand oar.

especially fond of having these carved with many figures. For them the machete is an indispensable tool that they always carry around and use as a chopping knife, sword, and knife, indeed, even to cut splinters or thorns out of the foot with the tip. They use field axes or hatchets to cut down the bush in order to lay out their small cultivation grounds and to work the wood that they float by rafts and sell.

562 412 [824] [413] The women possess, aside from a machete or knife, also mattocks with which they keep their lands and the place near the dwelling neat; they make brooms from the pina palm racemes or from rice ears bound in sheaves. They like to have scissors, needles, and pins, while for knitting they use a pointed and bent nail.

413 [283] [286] They spin their sewing thread from cotton with a certain tool which they call kéké; they also have a round, wooden tool called sepoe, with which they very nicely and sturdily /11/ make

/26 cont./

728 communicate to one another their opinions, in what way they
695 wish to see the points of difference resolved. If they are agreed concerning these, then they return to the chief in the shed and the discussion of the matter takes place anew, until finally agreement exists. During this consultation of the elders or council
● [562] members a solemn seriousness prevails among them. Women are sometimes admitted to these conferences, but never have a voice, and come merely to listen and to see.

After the matter has been settled to the satisfaction of all parties, the cup once more makes several rounds among those present, and thereafter everyone goes silently and quietly to his camp or dwelling.

Chapter XVIII

Music, Musical Instruments

533 Their music is very simple and monotonous; one makes use of it, to the accompaniment of song and dance, at festivals and cult ceremonies.

534 The instruments are variously used and doubtless according to the type of event. Thus the so-called long drum, called agida (2), is played at cult ceremonies; on other occasions one

2. Papáá drum.

uses the small or apientie drum. Furthermore they have an instrument called kwakwa stool by them, a stool or board of very hard wood on which one beats with two sticks.

534 When they dance the papaá-wenti, an African idol dance,
535 they use the agida drum. For the songé, or ordinary dance, they play the small drum or apienti.

They dance the soessa to the beat of the small drum and with the kwakwa stool; in executing the last-named dance a great deal of competition prevails among the dancers, and the one who /27/

/58 cont./

166 619 It is fitting to make an exception of the case of OWétiti (Papaïston) and OMa Imma (Kotika), who separated from their groups with their numerous descendants in order to found villages on the lower course of the river. These groups continue to consider themselves Boni; they are the nuclei of future villages.

[162] [621] For the same reasons it is difficult to get exact figures on immigration. About 100 Djuka and Saramaka have founded farming villages in Boni country but keep all their ties with their villages of origin; some 30 of them have married Boni women; one can estimate that some 15 have completely bound up their fate with the Boni and can be considered as integrated into the villages in which they have settled.

16 128 [562] All in all one can estimate that emigration and immigration of adult men, both very insignificant, compensate for each other; they have practically no importance on the social plane (since only the residence of the women has any influence upon the grouping of the lineages) or on the demographic plane; with the Boni the pyramid of ages constructed from the census of the villages represents very faithfully the demographic state of the population and lends itself to precise calculations of mortality (1).

1. It is not the same for the majority of African populations either because of emigration to the cities or polygamy. The presence of several average polygamists in a village is enough to render completely erroneous the counts of cross-sections by age.

166 57 59 613 The founding of new lineages results from the immigration of several Djuka women, some having come to settle permanently near their husbands, others brought up by their fathers in a Boni village. Half a dozen such cases occur in each generation, but

/64 cont./

613 561 Nevertheless the lineage is not strictly speaking divided into age grades; and when the men assemble in council for an affair which concerns the whole group, all may take the floor without consideration either of age or of place in the genealogy.

613 571 564 The council (kuutu). This is the principal social institution within the lo. The kuutu is the assembly of the men of the lo without consideration of age. No precise rule defines the age at which an adolescent may begin to attend it, and in principle all may take the floor. But decorum requires that unless they are personally interested in the question or have something important to say, the young let the elders do the talking. /65/

613 571 It is the captain (hedemã) and in his absence the eldest of the lineage who presides. He faces the assemblage, surrounded by some of the oldest men.

[537] Opposite him he has a respondent (piki mã) who greets all his sentences with ritual approbations hiya, hiya ba!, na so!, etc., without which a Refugee Black could not suitably make his speech.

Each one then speaks if he feels the need to express his opinion. Women do not take part in the council unless it is a •562 question of a daughter's marriage; but it happens that men leave the meeting to go get the advice of their mothers and take their places again. If it concerns a simple affair without suprahuman complications, such as the fixing of the price of a piece of work, the discussion is often quickly over; but in the opposite case the discussion continues interminably, for there is no exact rule for concluding it. Only a negative rule exists: the determined opposition of one-fourth to one-fifth of the council members prevents the carrying out of a project.

/68 cont./

613 624 [562] The basia are the mouthpieces of the captain, and not at all deputies having specific authority over a definite fraction of the village. There are three or four per village; in addition there are one or two women basia through whom the village head commands the work reserved for the women.

613 554 241 282 The head of the lineage possesses no religious powers over the land. The Refugee Blacks assume that the fertility of the soil depends exclusively on local divinities, to whom each one prays on his own behalf.

613 554 681 The captain, no more than the council, does not have the right to expel a member from the lineage, even for marked unworthiness. This is one of the most remarkable aspects of the legal conceptions of the Refugee Blacks, tied to the idea that a lineage represents only one single life. There again the thought of the Refugee Blacks can be regarded as the extreme opposite of the thought of the Bamiléké, with whom the head alone retains possession of the rights over the land, expulsion constituting the supreme social sanction.

881 Initiation; age classes; men's society. These African institutions seem totally unknown to the Refugee Blacks. No form of initiation of adolescents exists, and no ceremony marks collectively their [304] [852] [561] entrance into social life. Circumcision and excision are not practiced. For the children, boys and girls, there are two stages: that of the first garment, which is given upon the appearance of the pubic hair, at about 12-13 years, without ceremony, and the end of education which coincides with marriage.

561 The society of the Refugee Blacks rests however in large part on age hierarchy; strictly speaking there are no age classes involving a fixed organization, but they exist tacitly:

/68 cont./

561 198 The class of the young people, yuŋku sama, has definite activities; "style," that is to say, elegance, dancing, singing; it has a special language made up from taki-taki by inversion or addition of syllables. When the language begins to be known outside the group of young people, it is abandoned and another is invented. These past years the language in vogue was akɔɔpina, of Djuka origin; it had given rise to a whole folklore of songs.

561 Two other age classes appear to be rather clearly differentiated: that of the elders /69/ - gaĩ sama - (older than some 50 years), whose voices are preponderant in the councils, and that of the old men - gaĩndi sama - (older than 65 to 70 years).

[808] It is conceded by all that only the elders possess wisdom and knowledge, and in principle, in a discussion, the opinion of the eldest of them has the force of law.

575 Neither does one perceive among the Refugee Blacks any customary societies playing a role comparable to the men's society

571 in the Sudan for example. In a general way their social life, very individualistic in spite of appearances, knows no other organization than the one resulting from kinship ties.

769 Nevertheless, the organization of the men within each village with an eye to the mourning ceremonies can be regarded as a rough approximation to customary societies:

--Kisimã or coffin-makers;

--Olɔma or grave-diggers.

But these societies are narrowly specialized and their customary powers exist only as long as the duration of their effective work.

•562 Men and women. Even within the lineage where men and women

571 call one another brother, sister, aunt ... the relations between men and women are marked by mistrust.

/69 cont./

562 828 [191] It is assumed once and for all that women are shrews on whom one cannot count and from whom one can get nothing. The Refugee Blacks are inexhaustible on this subject and their opinion about the women of their group is very similar to that of Africans in general: they call them ill-natured, devoid of feeling, selfish, greedy, and unfaithful.

562 591 [165] In general, women are held apart from regular social life; no form of customary society of women exists. In the mourning ceremonies, which correspond to a veritable mobilization of the village, they play no role, except to prepare the meals.

562 789 794 Yet the women play indirectly an important role in the social life by way of the cults of possession. The Papa gadu gods so formidable have women nearly exclusively as bearers, and we shall see in studying the functioning of the kunu that they are the principal actors in this. Through this activity, which is exerted in arbitrary fashion on the outskirts of the institutions of regular social life, the women maintain around themselves an atmosphere of fear; it is not impossible that the functioning of these cults is influenced by the concern of the women to maintain their privileged position in the society of the Refugee Blacks.

562 159 Many women are charitable and have a certain generosity toward the members of their family, insuring the maintenance of the old men without resources. But their benevolence is essentially subjective and extends only to a small circle of personal friends and their nearest relatives. As soon as the elders appeal to them for a question of general interest, claiming to give them orders or even advice, they meet an attitude systematically malevolent and stubborn. /70/

[413] The lineage heads avoid giving them orders directly, for they run a strong risk of getting themselves insulted, as we have observed many a time.

/70 cont./

159 162 613 [591] In March, 1957, Awéni, head of the Afi lineage, established in Asini, was concerned about regrouping the members of his lineage and especially bringing back to Asini Magdaléna (c20), a woman of about 45 years who had settled in Kormotibo near her husband L... (†1955), with her children and others whom she had raised. He went to Kormotibo and pointed out to her that since her husband was dead, she no longer had any reason to stay there and that she should come back to Asini. Magdaléna insulted him in front of the inhabitants of the village, proclaimed that she had no orders to receive from anybody; then when he insisted, she armed herself with a stick and chased him across the village as far as the landing place. He had to re-embark precipitately to the laughter of the Kormotibo people.

Political and Legal Powers

643 613 [193] The grand man. The head of the Dikan lo fills the office of grand man of the Boni. The present grand man, Difu, was about 67 years old in 1958.

Oral tradition has kept the names of his seven predecessors:

Gongo (Dikan lo)	1810-1840	dates noted according to Coudreau
Labi (Adam?) (Dikan lo)	1840-1870	
Atyaba (Kotika lo)	1870-1876	
Anato (Kotika lo)	1876-1891	
Ochi (Dikan lo)	1891-1915	
Awemay id.	1917-1936	
Difu id.	since 1937.	

[195] According to information collected by Coudreau in 1887, Gongo was the successor to Agosu, himself successor to Boni. Upon the death of Labi, there were only women and children in the Dikan lo. The office of grand man then passed to the Kotika lo with Atyaba and Anato. It then came back to the Dikan lo with Ochi.

/T9 cont./

42 241 Thus out of ten clearings we find only two cases where a member of the lineage gave his right of use to another during his lifetime; in four cases the right of use was taken over by a daughter upon the death of her mother; in two cases it passed to a distant relative.

241 423 425 562 Anyone, man or woman, may hold rights of use. But examination of the clearings shows that the great majority of men do not ask for any, and that nearly all the land is appropriated by women. In the example noted, out of ten clearings only one is appropriated by a man. This derives from the fact that most men are eminent to cut their wives' clearings on their wives' lands but do not bother to farm on their own account.

241 423 [413] Each woman holds rights of use over a certain number of clearings distributed in the different territorial zones of her lineage. It is important to have, so to say, many cords to one's bow, for it is necessary to be able, according to the activity of the manioc ants, to pass from one sector to another or on the contrary to work prematurely a clearing which one was hoping to leave fallow for several years.

241 425 [423] For example, Tini (F1) holds rights over six to seven clearings. For one (No. 104), she created the right of use on her own behalf by clearing it out of old secondary forest without any known owner. As for another (No. 107), she received it from Loka (D13), a distant relative, as a gift during his lifetime. As for the others (for example No. 106), she created the right on her own behalf by farming them first upon the death of their holder.

241 423 The right of use can be loaned, either to a member of the lineage or even to an outsider. It is specified that the loan is made for a certain number of years and that it is revocable. In such a case the donor does not lose his right of use. /a.b/

/86 cont./

[421] [613] [423] [241] Near this clearing is the limit of the lineage lands; beyond are the clearings of Loka village (Lapé lineage).

Out of the 16 clearings examined here, 14 are occupied by members of the Papaïston group at Boniville, two are held by temporary users, outsiders to the group. Out of the 16 clearings [542] 13 are held by women and three by men.

Lands of Loka village (Lapé lo). This village, with its annex Lapé Tabiki, is the residence village of the Lapé lo. The Lapé lo, [614] whose genealogy is completely known and which remains geographically well grouped, is divided into two fractions without ceasing to constitute a lineage (bee) in the strict sense of the term. Its lands are divided into three zones:

--One on the east bank of the Maroni, behind Loka village.

/87/ --Another on the west bank (Surinam bank) opposite Lapé Tabiki, which we were not able to examine.

--Another upstream from Maripasoula, where part of the members of the lineage possess farming habitations.

[311] The first zone has been almost completely abandoned for about ten years as a consequence of an exceptional pullulation of manioc ants. We have summarized only a few relatively recent clearings there:

No.	Last User	Year	By What Right	Duration of Last Fallow Period
31 Δ	Akwadé (L1, E22) for himself	1948	member of the Lapé lo	cut only once on old secondary forest
32 Δ	Akwadé, for himself	1950	id.	cut twice in all by Akwadé

[Lands of Loka Village (Lapé'lo)]

/88/

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No.		Last User	Year	By What Right	Duration of Last Fallow Period
39	○	Chii; clearing cut by her son Ayaubédé	1955	id.	?
40	△	Koniman (LI. E31) for himself	1953	id.	4 years (cut by himself in 1949)

[562] Out of the eleven clearings examined here, all are farmed by members of the Lapé lo; seven are held by men and four by women.

Lands of the Dju lo (Asisi village) in the Ingi Udu locality. The Dju lo, whose genealogy is completely known, also constitutes a lineage in the strict sense of the term. It remains well grouped geographically with the exception of a small group established in Boniville close to the grand man.

The lands of the Dju lo are distributed in several zones:

--One on the east bank of the Lawa, a little downstream from Asisi, in the Ingi Udu locality;

--One on the Dutch bank opposite Gengé Tabiki;

--One upstream from Maripasoula at the confluence with the Inini, where an important farming habitation is established (Atikati village);

--Finally, several members of the group make their clearings near Kormotibo in the Kuyaku locality, on the lands of the Dipélu II lo.

Clearings summarized here all belong to the first zone.

621 /89 cont./
613 in which these finages were constituted, one must not expect to
423 find clear boundaries.

These 14 clearings are thus used exclusively by members
241 of the Dju lineage living in Asisi village. All but two are held
● [562] by women. /90/

It is interesting to study the kinship ties of the members of the lineage making their clearings in different zones. One might actually believe that there is a tendency toward individualization of sublineages, and that the descendants of a particular woman tend to hold exclusively the use of such and such a zone.

We see here that such is not the case.

In zone 1 (studied here), make their clearings: Tini (F1), Paana (G2), Féni (G3), very close relatives, but also Lènga (F36), Kukusa (F40), and Félicia (G41), whose relationship with the first-named is as distant as possible within the lineage: Félicia and Paana for example are relatives in the 12th degree.

The same thing is observed in other zones, as we shall see in the study of farming habitations.

621 Lands of the Awara Bakka lo (Asisi village). The finage of the
613 Awara Bakka lo is particularly interesting to study, for this lo
614 has a more complex structure. Study of the genealogy shows the
423 existence of three distinct fractions, which we have designated respectively as Aw.B.1, Aw.B.2, Aw.B.3. The Aw.B.1 and 2 fractions consider themselves as the same lineage in the strict sense (b&f). On the contrary, fraction 3 can be considered as a separate lineage from the point of view of legal responsibility. Moreover, the members of the small Afi lineage, living with the Awara Bakka, also constitute a separate unit from the legal point of view. It is important to study whether that carries over into their territorial implantation.

[Lands of the Awara Bakka lo (Asisi Village) Boni]

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/92 cont./

No.	Last User	Year	By What Right	Duration of Last Fallow Period
87 O	Noémi; clearing cut by herself (having become a widow)	1956	id. 1st fraction	3 years /93/
88 O	Titi; clearing cut by herself	1955	id. 1st fraction	3 years
89 O	Amélia (Aw.B.1, F19); clearing cut by her husband Sindu	1959	id. 1st fraction	4 years
90 O	Titi; cl. cut by her son Dopia	1954	id. 1st fraction	5 years

• [562] Of the 27 clearings examined, only two /sic/ are held by men, 25 /sic/ by women.

19 are allotted to members of the 1st fraction;
2 " " to a member of the 2nd fraction;
2 " " to members of the 3rd fraction;
4 " " to members of the Afi lineage.

Thus one can deduce from this study that there is no tendency toward the making up of separate finages by the various fractions of the Awara Bakka lo. The members of the Afi lineage living in their midst have no tendency to group their clearings, either.

In fact, the inhabitants of a village, even issuing from different lineages, possess joint rights over the lands.

/95/

Out of 14 clearings examined here, all without exception are occupied by the members of the Dipélu II fraction in Asisi. This fraction is geographically separated from the other lineages of Asisi village, and has formed a separate finage; that has to do with its relatively high effective force and the good relations among its members (the Afi lineage, with an analogous force but divided by disagreements, has not succeeded in forming a separate finage).

Of 14 clearings, 13 are held by women and one by a man /sic/.

Study of several clearings of Papaïston village. The part of the Papaïston finage situated on the French bank had been abandoned for several years because of an abnormal pullulation of manioc ants. In 1956-57 all the inhabitants of the village were making their clearings on the Surinam bank.

Only several clearings going back to the years 1947-50 could be identified.

No.	Last User	Year	By What Right	Duration of Last Fallow Period
111 O	Efa (P1. D4)	1946	member of the Papa-ïston lo	cleared for the 1st time on old secondary forest
112 O	Wilhelmina (P1. F1); clearing cut by her husband Bésu	1947	id.	id.
113 O	Oben (P1. E13)	1950	id.	id.

[Papaïston Village]

/95 cont./

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No.	Last User	Year	By What Right	Duration of Last Fallow Period
114 ○	Gou (P1, F8); clearing cut by her husband Akwali		id.	id.
115 ○	Puti (P2, F71); clearing cut by her husband Maïpa	1951	id.	cleared off for the 1st time on old secondary forest
116 ○	Héléna (P1, F2); clearing cut by her husband Baliki	1951	id.	id.

[52] These six clearings are held by women of the Papaïston lineage, in accordance with the residence principle of the Refugee Blacks.

080

/96/ The Social System Illuminated by the Study of Implantation on the Soil

128 Study of the clearings in the neighborhood of the farming villages gives exact information about the structure of the kin groups which cannot be obtained by direct interrogation.

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277 --Transmission of rights over land within the lineage fraction having the same residence constitutes an imprescriptible legal principle, to which one refers as the conclusive argument to settle every dispute;

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429 Recapitulation:

858 70% of the boys
613 85% of the girls are raised in the mother's lineage

27% of the boys
13% of the girls are raised in the father's lineage

3% of the boys
2% of the girls are raised by outsiders to both lineages.

429 It is important, moreover, to emphasize in what proportion
858 the children are brought up by women or men:
562

67% of the boys
86% of the girls are raised by women

33% of the boys
12% of the girls are raised by men.

429 This preponderant role of women in the education of the
562 children is one of the fundamental aspects of the social structure
571 of the Refugee Blacks. In fact, women consider that the children
belong to them, and if they give some to men to bring up, it is
[191] only as many as they wish to. This conception which is found to
be widespread among the Blacks of America, in the West Indies
as in Guiana, explains much more than the frequency of divorces, the impossibility for them to make up patrilineages in the absence of coercion exerted upon the women.

429 Several important pieces of information may still be drawn from these tables:

/134 cont./

429 The guardian continues to have a certain power all his life over his ward become adult. He is the conciliator to whom one applies first if there is any complaint about his ward.

This power of conciliation is bequeathed by the guardian at his death, as is the guardianship itself.

593 613 152 Role of the mother. For the Refugee Blacks, the sacred tie is pre-eminently the one which attaches them to their mother and through her to the ancestors of the lineage. It is manifested with respect to the mother by a delicate and deep feeling of affection which applies also, less directly, to the close relatives on the maternal side and to all the members of the lineage. It is not [601] idly that within the lineage the men call one another brothers; the obligations /135/ they have toward one another are accepted by all with joy, and each tries his best to fulfill them, for he transposes to them the sentiment of love which he feels toward his mother.

114 562 593 The term matriarchy has often been used wrongly with regard to the Refugee Blacks, letting people believe that the woman exercises authority there; this is an error, the woman does not enter their councils and from a political point of view does not exist in their eyes; the woman has influence and authority only as mother, and over her own children.

593 The mother's authority remains very great over her sons after they have become men; none of them will undertake an important enterprise or leave for a long trip without consulting his mother; if she is absolutely opposed to the project, he will scarcely dare go on with it. We heard in December, 1952 a man of 45, M..., serious and intelligent, say to us with regret: "I would certainly go with you as far as Cayenne, but my mother does not wish it."

/137 cont./

831 necessary food) than by a sentimental motive. It is very rare to meet among them the appearance of sincere and lasting love for a woman; that is sometimes seen, but it is the exception.

• 562 It is not enough to say that they have few emotional feelings with respect to women. In the conversations heard in the evening around the campfires a deep contempt is expressed on this subject; they even speak of the Boni women as of a foreign and almost enemy nation; they consider them besides as half irresponsible. This attitude shows through in the custom concern- [684] ing adultery, which decrees that the lover be beaten but not the wife.

581 Among the Refugee Blacks marriage is in fact a contract of maintenance between a man and woman, which provides for the execution of such-and-such work by the one for the benefit of the other, and for the wife the obligation to be faithful. [586] This contract can be cancelled unilaterally without any sort of indemnity. [765] It does not directly involve the relatives of the spouses; it involves them only in case of the death of one spouse, for the surviving spouse must /138/ put up with the subservience [613] of mourning. It is principally for this reason that a marriage must be officially known by both lineages, and that a divorce must be proclaimed without delay.

582 Exogamy. Marriage is forbidden between persons of the same
613 lineage. In expressing this prohibition the Refugee Blacks
614 employ the word bee (lineage in the restricted sense) and not the word lo.

613 As we have seen in studying the situation of the various lineages, the various Boni kin groups follow different rules in this regard:

--The Dju lineage, which forms only one single group from the genealogical point of view, does not allow marriage between its members;

/145 cont./

582 Generally speaking, the custom of the Refugee Blacks used to consider as immoral the marriage of a very young girl to an old man, or of a very young boy to an adult woman. 588 178 The weakening of family morals is clearly demonstrated by two events which happened during the summer of 1960. A boy of thirteen and a half, K... of Boniville, left his guardian to join an Assisi woman, A..., 20 years older than he and with a very bad reputation to boot; some months later his example was imitated /146/ by a boy of 14 who began living with a [684] [613] woman of 29. Nothing like that had ever been seen, and people inveighed against the scandal of it; but in both cases, guardians and lineage heads showed themselves incapable of making their authority respected by force.

882 [562] Marriage of girls. It can still be said (although things are in the process of changing rapidly) that girls, kweyi umã, occupy a place apart in the thought of the Refugee Blacks; the reprobation which embraces women does not extend to them. 882 834 [291] People say that girls "have good manners," and in fact most of them, although naked except for a little apron, have a reserved attitude, a becoming bearing, which contrast with the attitude of the married women. To tell the truth, this virtue is not so much due to natural inclinations as to the strict [593] vigilance with which their mothers surround them. The mothers literally do not let them out of their sight and permit no man to speak to them out of their presence. "Until dawn, until the cock crows, she keeps vigil," says the song, alluding to the mother who watches over her daughter's virtue. If a girl [836] comes to lose her virginity without being properly married, [599] pɔti na ɔsu, "established in a house," it is a dishonor for her mother and her near relatives.

/149 cont./

592 The household. Household life is a limited association, freely
593 agreed upon by two beings who live totally independent of each other, the emotional life of each remaining almost entirely centered upon his maternal family. It entails reciprocal duties:

--For the man, to build a house for his wife in her village, to construct a new boat for her every three or four years, to cut a clearing for her each year /150/ and help in planting it, to furnish her with imported commodities, cloth, salt, kerosene, tools, which she needs, as well as game and smoke-dried fish;

--For the woman, to farm the clearing and furnish her husband when he comes to visit her with couac and the vegetables
[462] necessary for his food. (The man, used to living as a bachelor, owns his own cooking utensils and most of the time prepares his meals himself.)

This system of intermittent conjugal life seems to assure the Boni a perfect balance at the same time that it permits them
• [562] to satisfy their taste for change. The men divide their life among work, visits to their different wives, hunting and fishing expeditions; their life is thus constantly renewed and they are protected against tendencies toward apathy and mental inertia.

[241] In general, as long as the union lasts, the woman fulfills
[422] exactly her obligations; although the yield from the clearing is
[434] her property and the excess of the harvest is sold for her exclusive benefit, the man is assured of getting from her all the
[591] provisions he needs. On the other hand, many men, through laziness, get out of constructing a house for their wives and the latter continue to live with their mothers. In the villages on the French bank about 20 such cases were observed in 1958.
591 Several cases are even noted in which a woman, aged but still
592 having unmarried children, one or two of her daughters and their children are living together in one house. For example, in Asisi village, nine persons were living together in the very small house of their mother and grandmother Tini.

/154 cont./

586 As far as the clearing already cut and planted is concerned, if it is on the land of the wife's family, the man can demand nothing. However, some women continue to furnish couac for a year after breaking up.

If the clearing is on the husband's lands, the woman continues to farm it normally. But she is required to furnish [593] food as if there had been no rupture. This is why men who do [241] not trust their wives insist on cutting the clearing on land of their own lineage.

Many women wait to divorce their husbands until after they have cut the year's clearing! In January, 1957, upon the return of the border-fixing mission from the southern frontier, /155/ one of us heard M..., a woman of about 40, speak in these terms of her husband T..., 60 years old, who had done everything for her and still used to come to take part in laborious jobs to procure money for her: "He is getting old; I am going to have to look for another."

Observation at Maripasoula, Nov. 5, 1953.

Mutété, boatman of the Maripasoula post, laments in front of his comrades: his wife has just had him notified, without indicating any motive, that she was breaking with him. She did not even disturb herself to tell him so, and she waited until he had finished cutting the year's clearing for her! His • [562] comrades once more expressed their rancor against the avarice, spitefulness, and inconstancy of Boni women, inferior beings whom they had once and for all given up trying to understand.

Among the Refugee Blacks people divorce at any age, at 70 years as well as at 18. Thus it is that Captain Diolé (+1951), head of the Dju lo, and his wife Efa, of the Papaïston lo, divorced each other about 1940 when both were approaching 70 and had remained together more than 35 years: in growing old their natures no longer hit it off.

/179 cont./

765 [769] [778] [613] After three months, an offering is made at the fraga tiki of the dead person's lineage, setting forth how much her spouse has respected her memory and asking permission to lighten the manifestations of his sorrow. The mourning is then lightened, but the man in mourning continues to wear a bandeau around his head or at the very least an old beret.

765 461 [613] During the first months the man in mourning has no other responsibility than to hunt and fish at the order of the dead woman's lineage. He does his own cooking with the food given to him; he cuts a clearing for his mother-in-law or another woman of the deceased's relatives, who will farm it with him.

[431] Next, he receives the order to go and earn the money necessary for the sizable contribution he must bring to the festival of the lifting of mourning. During the entire duration of the mourning he must report on his work and moves.

765 [606] When the end of mourning approaches, he must do a job for the benefit of his mother-in-law, generally redoing the roof of her house or building a boat for her.

[626] These arrangements do not involve any material sanction whatever. Like the rest of the social life of the Refugee Blacks, they rest entirely upon fear of a suprahuman sanction.

[589] After the lifting of mourning, the person in mourning may remarry without further delay.

765 768 [562] State of widows and co-wives of a widower. The state of a woman in mourning is practically identical to that of a widower. She lives for the duration of mourning in her deceased husband's house under the surveillance of his near relatives on the maternal side. The dead man's lineage lends her all the objects she needs and furnishes the imported commodities (salt, kerosene, soap) that she uses. On the other hand, she may freely use the produce of the clearing that her husband had cut for her, since it is taken for granted that these products are the exclusive property of the wife.

[613] [439]

/201 cont./

791 787 [794] teacher and who teach a small group of disciples - kineki -, without distinction of villages or lineages and under their sole responsibility; each one, man or woman, is absolutely free to pursue his teaching. . . /203/

/202/These teachers are not themselves possessed, but they are believed to know the processes which permit the neophyte to obtain possession with the minimum of risks. They accept the [776] fact, however, that that involves dangers, for one cannot oblige a particular gadu to come into someone, and one may in its place obtain an undesirable gadu.

791 787 776 Procedures vary according to the categories of gadu sought. But they involve three elements which are always found in one form or another:

[198] --They begin by teaching the pupil the language of the divinity, or rudiments at the very least (as we shall point out further on, these languages appear to be in decline); these lessons are private;

[824] --On behalf of a group of pupils, the teacher prepares infusions of certain leaves which are suited to the divinity in question. It is thought that the god likes these plants and that they have the power to attract it.

[788] In certain cults it is required of the pupil to utter at the same time formulas inviting the god to come into him. But this is not general; in the cult of the Papa gadu especially, the teachers bathe the students in the greatest silence.

791 787 824 At the end of the session, the student is often asked to drink a little of the infusion. One might believe that it is a matter of a process having a physical action, certain plants possibly containing hypnotic substances; but except for one aspect of the cult of the Kumẽnti of which we shall speak later, this does not seem true; especially about the plants believed to attract the Papa gadu, it seems that they have received this role because of their color or odor. Our feeling is that, at least [562] for the Papa gadu cult which appeals more especially to women, suggestion plays an essential part.

/206 cont./

The Kumẽnti. These gods are common to the Saramaka (Kromenti) (1), Djuka, and Boni. The Kumẽnti are considered to be benevolent gods and friends of men, so their possession is very much desired. They do not come into men spontaneously, they are obtained only by applying to a teacher. In principle only men can obtain Kumẽnti, while on the other hand only women can have Bũnzunki /sic/.

1. There is no doubt about the origin of this word; it is a deformation of Coromantin, name given in the 18th century to Ashanti country. The "Coromantin Negroes," reputed to be particularly intractable, played a large role in the slave revolts. The Kumenti cult of possession must originally have been a cult peculiar to the Coromantin nation.

The Kumẽnti are specialized in protection against fire and against machete and gun wounds. These dangers hold the largest place among the anxieties of the Refugee Blacks, who spend almost all their life in the bush and with whom nearly all sores become infected and have serious consequences. Thus the Kumẽnti cult holds an important place in their magic; even someone who is not possessed will try to obtain from these gods an ɔbia that will protect him from these various dangers.

The instruction of the disciples of these gods takes as its pattern the procedures described above, but the collective dances appear to play an essential part. The teacher calls on the gods by beating a special rhythm on ordinary drums (apinti) and by uttering invocations punctuated by the rattle of the saka (Indian maraka, that is, hollow calabash provided with a handle and containing seeds).

/209 cont./
wata ɲgi. Indians of the water. In certain spots, people have known since the time of the ancestors that there resides such a Bũnsuŋki, whose name they know; when they pass there, they address a prayer to it while making a sacrifice of tafia.

(The Bũnsuŋki must not be confused with wata mama, the mama-of-the-water of the Creoles, a dreaded divinity but one which the Boni do not appear to worship. The wata mama lives at the bottom of deep holes in river beds and never allows her face to be seen; she sometimes abandons one of her long hairs on the rocks and he who finds it becomes rich).

/210/ The Bũnsuŋki can enter into human beings, exclusively, it seems, into women. They give a different gita from those of the Kumẽnti. The possessed person dances at the edge of the water, then swims and dives for a long time. They affirm that if its possession is sufficiently intense, the genie carries the possessed woman along to the bottom of the water, where she stays for a very long time without any harm! That is supposed to have happened especially in Asisi village to a woman named Dabisa.

Possession by the Bũnsuŋki is not frequent. In 1952 it was known in Boni country in only three women.

As for men, they may perceive these divinities in dreams and receive benefits from them. For that they go to the place where it resides and bathe, uttering an invocation: "O god, watch over me, protect me, come to me at night when I sleep, speak to me, act so that I may not be sick, so that I may get rich." The following night, the divinity will come in a dream, demand a sacrifice (beer in general), say that it /grants/ the prayer.

The Vɔɔdũ (1). These are gods much feared for their evil

1. This word is obviously a deformation of the Dahomey word vodũn.

/210 cont./

776 [825] The Bumba gadu, other gods of the same nature and equally feared, have as bearers other categories of snakes, principally the great anaconda water snakes.

[784] [812] The Voodû, we have said, are feared; they can exercise on a lineage the collective curse called kunu. But, no more than the Kumẽnti do not represent a principle of good, they do not represent a principle of evil. Not all are so badly disposed toward men, and even if one of them is the enemy of a lineage it is not for that reason badly disposed toward the rest of men. 787 178 [562] However this may be, the cult of possession of the Papa gadu is not at all in decline among the Boni. According to the cross-checking we have been able to do, of the 670 persons living on the French bank there are at least 40 to 50 who have a Papa gadu, the great majority of them old women. /---/

787 784 /211/ The Voodû /sic/ are much feared, and for that very reason much respected. They are oracles which are consulted very often, without consideration of the evil their kunu has done and will still do. A god which exercises the kunu but which is provisionally declared appeased may be consulted without danger; it is always assumed that in any case its bearer, if he respects its commands, has nothing to fear from it.

787 562 It is possible that, very unconsciously, women use the fear that the Papa gadu gods inspire in order to maintain their independence and privileged position in Refugee Black society.

153 79 787 [198] [178] [515] [824] [534] Instruction in possession appears to take as a pattern the same principles as that which correspond to the Kumẽnti. It involves the teaching of the Papa language; this language appeared to us to be in decline; in fact, it is used only for formulas of greeting; then the possessed people vaticinate in ordinary language. Instruction in possession also involves daily ablutions with decoctions of leaves; certain of these mixtures are particularly complicated (it is said that they include more than a hundred different kinds of leaves). Instruction is essentially individual; however it also includes dances; on this occasion a

/211 cont./

153 special drum is used, about two meters long and very narrow,
791 devoid of any decoration, which is called lĩŋga dɔ̃ or papa
789 dɔ̃.
534

To call on her gita, the possessed woman (they are almost
787 always women) stands, puts on a piece of cloth which she always
[562] keeps nearby and always takes along with her when she travels:
this is the garment of the god; it consists of a sort of scarf
crossed in front; then she throws white clay, pemba, on her feet
from right to left and left to right while invoking the god.
Possession is almost immediate. One sees the woman's eyes
roll up and her expression become haggard. The god does not
cover himself entirely with pemba like the Kumẽnti, he makes
himself a sort of headband on the forehead with white clay.
787 He begins with an invocation to Masa Gadu said in ordinary
788 language.
639
[782] "Masa gadu, gi mi pimisi, beka mi na pikin nẽŋge; ala
sani di mi ɔ taki, na yu mu gi mi kaakiti, beka na yu abi mi
kaakiti, da mi yɛ̃falu gi yu."

"Masa Gadu, I implore you, for I am a humble creature;
(in) all that I am going to say, it is you who will give me
strength, for my strength is in you; I shall exalt you."

787 Next come formulas of welcome to those present, which
788 are the exact translation of the formulas of greeting of everyday
[198] life, then songs, all in the Papa language. After about a quarter
of an hour, it enters a hut and sits down, answering in ordinary
language the questions of those present, always in a singing
tone.

787 Possession by Papa gadu does not have the bestial character
of possession by Kumẽnti; outside of the dances, it does not
involve brutish gestures or bizarre acts; the possessed woman
hums softly in a shrill voice, moving with graceful gestures.
[531] /212/ Sometimes she draws strange signs on the huts; the Boni
state that that is a kind of writing, that other possessed people

/214 cont./

789 their legs with this white clay; they prophesy in a singing tone, without the usual voice of their bearer's ceasing to be recognizable, expressing themselves in the Saramaka language.

796 The Ampuku have the appearance of men similar to Blacks, but unknown. They reside in the depths of the woods; some are good, others bad. One can gain their good will by [84] worshiping them, which is especially developed in Saramaka country.

796 Baliki, of Kormotibo village, tells of having been present 535 one day at a dance of the Ampuku, when he was traveling to [103] the Saramaka village of Baien.

"During the day, people went on the paths far into the bush to put down calabashes containing certain herbs. At night were seen to come out of the forest a large number of unknown men, dressed in the manner of the Saramaka. They danced all night, and at dawn left again as they had come."

796 The Ampuku gods, considered to be maleficent gods of [789] the bush, exercise their influence on everyone. When a person [824] has slept in the bush, he "washes" himself free of Ampuku with an infusion of leaves of five plants which are part of the secondary flora surrounding the villages and of which the principal plant is the sangaafu (Costus cylindricus).

791 Frequency of possession. In 1956 teachers or bas were very 787 scarce in Boni country. For the Kumenti gods, only S... (Kotika) remained; for the Papa gadu, since the death of Antinon (Dju), there remained only M... (Papalitoo) and B... [619] (Asisi). People were commonly going to receive instruction from Djuka teachers in the villages of the Tapanaoni.

787 It would be a great error to believe that nearly all the 562 men have gods. On the contrary, this is an exception. According to the evaluations we were able to make, there is not more than one adult man out of six or seven who is possessed.

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562 789 On the other hand, possession is much more frequent among women: it can be estimated that on the average, one adult woman out of three or four has a gadu.

562 776 789 For example in Boniville, out of 115 persons including about 70 adults, one reckons about 30 gods including 8 to 10 Papa gadu, 8 to 10 Kumfuti, 1 Bunuuki, and 2 Ampuku.

789 789 562 562 Apprenticeship for possession can begin from adult age, but it seems /215/ that in general it is between 35 and 50 that women take heed of obtaining a gadu. Would that not be, very unconsciously, the desire to stay in the limelight and indirectly to keep a hold over men, once the age of sensual attraction is past?

789 Possession continues for life, and it is out of the question for a god to be transmitted before the death of its bearer. For example, in 1957, the centenarian grandmother in Asisi village, Kuluba, still kept her Papa gadu god. She had not participated any more in the dances of possession for long years, but her gita was always consulted.

But it can happen, if a possessed person stops taking part in dances and practicing the rites that have been shown him, that any manifestation ceases at the end of a few years.

We observed that in B... of the Dipfiu II lo, in 1948 and 1949. He used to exhibit strong attacks of the gita of Kumfuti. He stopped his instruction, finding that it was costing too much and was taking time. In 1952 he exhibited only latent manifestations of his gita at rare intervals. In 1956 nothing was any longer observable.

789 789 It can happen, on the other hand, that attacks of possession become so frequent and so strong that the person concerned risks losing his reason; if it concerns a god which did not come of its own initiative, one can try to expel it. In order to "wash" someone free of a gita, he is made to pass between two rows of Bbiaman who hold dry palms, pins them in their hands and utter adjurations.

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784 613 776 787 Kunu of the Dju lineage. The Dju lineage in 1958 was affected by four kunu:

--An Ampuku which has exercised its vengeance since time immemorial, to the point where the origin of this kunu is no longer remembered, its bearers being Dabisa (G25) and Adyidya (E19), two women about 50 years old. This Ampuku formerly had as its bearer an ancestor named Agoabuchi, who died about 1940. Two or three years after his death, it manifested itself in Dabisa;

--A Papa gadu named Adawa which has also pursued the lineage with a pitiless vengeance since the time of the great ancestors. It revealed itself to the preceding generation in an ancestress named Sapiké (D5), and a long time after her death it passed into Pamasa (E26), a woman of 35. This kunu has grown worse since /225/ two other Papa gadu revealed themselves in recent years in two women named Kulina (F9) and Diana (E9). They declared that they were the descendants of the first one and that they came in support of it;

784 613 775 787 562 --A yaka whose name nobody wanted to tell us because they were so afraid of it. It is that of a man of the Awara Bakka lineage, who committed suicide two or three generations ago when he was unjustly accused of a crime by a man of the Dju lineage. Since then, this yaka has been exterminating the Dju lineage little by little. Its bearer in 1958 was an old woman of the Awara Bakka lineage, named Namu;

784 613 776 787 --A Kantamasu since, a very long time ago, an ancestress whose name is forgotten inadvertently destroyed a termitary while burning a clearing. It had as bearer a very old woman named Wima (E3) († 1957), and it manifested itself also in Ata (F2).

784 613 787 562 Thus, in this group, the maleficent gods had exclusively women as bearers; out of about 20 adult women, seven were participating in the functioning of the kunu.

/225 cont./

784 613 787 562 One sees from this example how the influence of women, exerted in arbitrary fashion, in a domain placed outside of custom and ordinary social life, weighs on the life of the group.

Kunu of the Dipélu lineage. The situation of the Dipélu 784 619 571 lineage with respect to the kunu is particularly interesting. Although split for perhaps 100 years into two separate groups, Dipélu I (L'Enfant Perdu and Apatu villages) and Dipélu II (Kormotibo and Asisi-Dip. II villages), this group still constitutes an undivided unit with respect to the kunu. Neither time nor [484] distance (it takes more than a week of traveling to make the round trip between L'Enfant Perdu and Apatu) has been able to [155] erase it up. The Apatu people come very often (at least some of them) to be present at the collective prayers which take place at L'Enfant Perdu to appease a kunu in order to cure a sick person.

784 619 226 [687] The oldest kunu ("since Africa") is that of a Papa gadu god whose tenor was ○ Dika (Dip. I. D10, † 1951) and which passed after her death into ○ Pééchina (Dip. I. E42, L'Enfant Perdu village). This kunu strikes indiscriminately the people of L'Enfant Perdu, Apatu, Kormotibo, Asisi-Dip. II, and the Dipélu fraction residing in Bonaville. To it, these past years, [761] have been attributed the death of ○ Way (Dip. I. E8, living [753] in Bonaville), the illness of △ Akwali (Dip. II. F7, Kormotibo village) and of ○ Bongo (same village).

784 775 619 [693] Another very old kunu is the one exercised by the yɔrka of a Surinam Creole who had settled with the Dipélu people a very long time ago. He was suspected of sorcery and killed. Since then his yɔrka comes back regularly to exterminate the Dipélu.

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784 Having no known lineage (his family, if he had any, was
786 in Surinam), it had taken people of the Dipélu lineage as
614 bearers. The last was △ Denis † in 1938. Since Denis'
787 death, it no longer has a bearer. The questioning of the dead reveals that they died by its kunu. The members of the two
[782] fractions of the lineage meet together (at least two or three members of each village come) to supplicate it.

784 A third kunu, very interesting in origin and supposed
614 action, /226/ in 1957 was borne by Kwau (Dip. I, E1, Kotika village). It results from the killing of an anaconda snake by Apatu † (Dip. I, C1), companion of the explorer Crevaux when he was traveling to /in/ Brazil. Upon contact with Europeans Apatu had become a freethinker and was no longer
[153] observing the laws of his people. Among the later victims of
[155] this kunu was counted Kwami (Dip. II, F4, Kormotibo village) who, gravely ill, had had to go to L'Enfant Perdu where the god had been invoked for him and offerings made. The death
[161] of Manga (Dip. I, E5, Bonville, † about 1930) was particularly attributed to it.

No other kunu has revealed itself in Apatu village since its founding in 1882.

784 A fourth kunu concerning all the Dipélu has as bearers
614 women of the Dipélu II group. It results from the inadvertent
786 murder of a Papa gadu whose bearer was a dagowe snake killed
787 in the course of the nivrée /fishing/ of a pool by Akonté
562 † (Dip. II, B1), transmitted to Kondo †, then to Alama (Dip. II, E1).

Since then Papa gadu have revealed themselves in ○ Apaïta (Dip. II, F9, Kormotibo village) and in ○ Kaala (Dip. II, G28, Asisi-Dip. II village). They declared themselves to be the descendants of the first and to come in support of it.

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In a general way, they consider that the bearer of a god exercising the kunu has nothing to fear from it personally if he rigorously observes the kina which have been imposed upon him. On the other hand, this god will punish any injury to its bearer. Thus these bearers (almost always old women) live surrounded by respect and fear.

/233/ Observations in January, 1958 (misfortunes attributed to vengeance of ancestors on their own lineage).

Do (Lapé) is taken ill on January 7, 1958 with a violent attack of dysentery. The same day his five-year-old son is grievously hurt at the wharf by falling on a broken bottle. Alarmed by this coincidence, the members of the Lapé lo assemble and proceed to question a possessed person. The latter reveals that it is the doing of an old woman of the lineage, Atala, dead for two years. Several lineage members have already been sick from this; the dead woman wanted to sanction offenses committed by the people of the lineage.

The same day in Boniville, Kiémenti (Dɔ), to whom I am recounting this affair, tells me that before the lifting of mourning for his mother Béniti, he and his sisters were sick. Divination showed that it was the doing of Béniti, who wished to hasten the celebration of the ceremony.

The kunu and social peace among the Boni. Role of the grand man. The kunu exercised by a yɔrka creates very strange relations among the Boni lineages. As blind and arbitrary as the vengeance attributed to the yɔrka may be, the Boni have the sense of the legal unity of the lineage too much for any resentment to exist: "They are killing our family..."; and yet the two lineages find themselves henceforth irreparably bound together. The victims of the kunu can no longer get along without people of the lineage of the yɔrka which pursues them with its vengeance, since they alone, by their prayers, can appease temporarily the anger of their ancestor. One conceives of the

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*539 discover what makes Pikinbaya rich like that and tell me." He took his eldest daughter, put her on a boat, on a big boat. The boat left the wharf of the king's village, it went until... it arrived at the wharf of Pikinbaya's village, a very large wharf. The cannon thundered (in her honor). Pikinbaya came in a big automobile and took the girl by the little finger; she got into the car which went as far as inside the grounds /of the house/. They entered the house. They stayed there until a whole week had /283/ slipped by. Then she said: "Pikinbaya," -- they were stretched out on the bed (1) -- "I am going to go

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1. It is hardly necessary to dwell on the image which the Refugee Blacks conceive of woman, as reflected by this tale. That the king's daughter agrees to give herself immediately to a man she has never seen poses no problem whatever. The narrator, so wordy elsewhere, does not grant a sentence for the description of the woman and her love affair with Pikinbaya.

away." He said: "Good, that's all right!" She said: "Pikinbaya, what makes you so rich?" He said: "You want to know? It is a pot I have at the head of my bed." She took the pot, enclosed it in an iron case, loaded it into the car, and the boat left the wharf.

(Immediately poverty swooped down on the village.)

Comrades, Pikinbaya's village became dirtier than Boniville (laughs from the audience, for Boniville is a badly

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157 24 31 in a sector recognized to be undamaged. But objections immediately come to their minds: one would not feel at home, people would be jealous of one another; above all, the children would go pilfering fruit and vegetables in the clearings of other families. The Refugee Blacks are unanimous in thinking that the children of one village put together in a single place would constitute a scourge much worse than the manioc-ant, and that dispersion is the wisest solution for maintaining the peace of families.

562 241 One observes likewise that the total freedom of woman, and the custom which leaves to her /290/ the free disposal of the products of the clearing, contribute toward preventing the development of agriculture with an eye to selling. In order [592] to undertake large clearings farmed jointly by one household, it would be necessary to have very unified and stable households, which is rare.

157 476 Difficulty of grouping for common advantage. The Refugee Blacks are incapable of forming groups voluntarily to undertake the execution of a job with an eye to common advantage. The small groups which get together for fishing, working gold, etc. are formed of intimate friends or near relatives and are hardly larger than four or five persons.

157 454 The Refugee Blacks are still less capable of grouping themselves into societies looking toward future benefits. Putting a part of their resources into a common pot with that of another seems to them not only illusory but immoral. Because of this fact there exists among them no way to group financial assets, sometimes good-sized.

426 Lending without interest is practiced rather commonly, having to do with small sums between near relatives or intimate friends. If a man feels capable of earning his living by buying a motor, he will succeed rather easily in finding the necessary money by borrowing from his brothers or friends, 10,000 francs

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of possession exist, the populations are particularly impermeable to Christian influence. Apparently destroyed, these cults soon reappear in another form, sometimes in Christian guise (possession by the saints).

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Let us add that one of the great strengths of the custom of the Refugee Blacks is the privileged position it gives to the woman. Women, shielded from the direct influence of Europeans and Creoles, and besides practically inaccessible to all reasoning, are hostile to changes which would infringe on their privileges. Now it is they, in fact, who have the education of the children in their hands.

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Thus it does not appear possible to "assimilate" these populations by destroying their original culture. The attempts inspired by fanaticism for civilizing will have as their only result its impoverishment, pushing the Refugee Blacks to dissimulate their beliefs, to abandon their art, costume, songs, and dances, all that makes up their joy in living. But the social structure based on the fear of ancestors and gods could be destroyed only by violence. We may hope that nobody thinks of coming to that.

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As for us who have lived a long time in the midst of the Refugee Blacks, we feel a deep esteem for them. By their historic past, the originality of the customs they have developed, the good relations they have been able to create with the other populations, they have proved their creative abilities; they deserve to be allowed to evolve in their own way. /blank page/